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## **Media Release**

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### **Our Kids Network encourages everyone to recognize National Indigenous History Month and expand their Indigenous literacy**

#### **Helpful resources are available on the OKN website**

Halton Region, Ontario – June is National Indigenous History Month in Canada, and Our Kids Network (OKN) is calling on all Canadians to spend time learning about the history, cultures, and present-day experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

OKN is a Halton-wide partnership of agencies and organizations serving children, youth, and families. The network began its own formal Truth and Reconciliation journey in 2019. Executive Director Elisabeth Wells explained that OKN has joined community-wide efforts to advance Reconciliation in Halton. One of the ways we do that is by supporting knowledge access on Indigenous people and their traditions and contributions.

“With our history of bringing people together to respond to the needs of children and youth, we’re well positioned to build community capacity to advance Reconciliation and offer practical resources to help members of our community who are doing their own thinking and activities around Truth and Reconciliation.”

#### **Resources vary by topic and type**

The recently redesigned OKN website has a prominent section devoted to [Indigenous Reconciliation](#). The large collection of links in the [Indigenous literacy section](#) refers visitors to resources such as websites, blog posts, videos, and books. It’s easy to find guidance on topics that range from conducting a Land Acknowledgement, to addressing social inequities experienced by Indigenous people, to exploring Indigenous languages.

Wells said that anyone is welcome to elevate their Indigenous literacy using the resources on the site.

“The material has been thoughtfully collected from an Indigenous viewpoint, to help any Canadian not only increase their knowledge, but also truly reflect on the Indigenous experience and the necessary steps on the path to Reconciliation.”

#### **Showcasing the contributions of Indigenous people**

OKN's Indigenous literacy section also includes links to resources that highlight the Indigenous spirit of innovation and the role of Indigenous people in Canadian economic development.

For example, site visitors can learn about architect [Douglas Cardinal](#), designer of numerous buildings, including the Canadian Museum of History, and [Animikii](#), an Indigenous-owned company that specializes in website design and software development and works on technology projects that improve outcomes for Indigenous people.

Under the heading of economic development, links direct visitors to organizations dedicated to building skills and employment opportunities among Indigenous populations, as well those that provide guidance to businesses on relationship-building and inclusion initiatives.

### **Weekly themes shift the focus**

Each week of National Indigenous History Month will be dedicated to a different theme:

- June 1 to 6: Women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people
- June 5 to 11: Environment, traditional knowledge, and territory
- June 10 to 18: Children and youth
- June 19 to 25: Languages, cultures, and arts
- June 26 to 30: Reconciliation

In light of OKN's focus on children and youth, Wells pointed out that her team is particularly proud of the resources they've compiled for young people and those who support them.

"These include story books for young children and documentaries for the older ones. We link to a video by author Monique Gray-Smith that helps support both families and professionals to have conversations with children about Residential Schools." You can see the video and other resources on OKN's new [Resource Hub](#).

OKN's work is informed by the Calls to Action developed by Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The 94 Calls to Action are designed to redress the legacy of Residential Schools and advance the process of Canadian Reconciliation.

To learn more about National Indigenous History Month in Canada, visit the [Government of Canada's website for Indigenous arts, culture and heritage](#). Our Kids Network is online at [ourkidsnetwork.ca](#).

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